



Media Release

How Tasmanian travel agents are pivoting to survive shutdown

[August 7 2020:] With Premier Peter Gutwein shutting Tasmania's borders until August 31st, one Burnie travel agent is already booking out intrastate tours to help her business survive.

Kathy Granger, owner and operator of Burnie and Smithton Travelcentres, has now sold out 5 trips of around 20 Tasmanians each to destinations like Bruny and King Islands, Cradle Mountain, the Tamar Valley and Strathgordon.

"People are ready to travel, the demand for travel agents is there, I've just had to adapt my business to the shutdowns in the meantime to keep going," says Kathy.

"The JobKeeper extension was welcome news, but I still need to do anything I can to keep my staff engaged and employed. We've had some frank discussions and I'm helping them find part-time jobs elsewhere to help them support their families."

Kathy says the border shutdowns and restrictions means travel agents will need ongoing tailored support.

"We understand and support the Premier's decision given what's happened in Victoria. If Tasmania goes into lockdown like Melbourne has, many small businesses like mine just won't survive."

"Travel agents are stuck in the middle of this pandemic, but I'm staying focused on a long term strategy to support my clients, my team and our tourism industry here in Tasmania."

AFTA CEO Darren Rudd said governments must understand that until international borders open travel agents will continue to struggle.

"AFTA recommends that If you're travelling within Tasmania, you book with reputable, credible and professional industry accredited ATAS travel agents like Kathy."

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Notes to Editors:



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The Australian Federation of Travel Agents (AFTA) is the peak body in Australia representing the retail travel industry. Founded in 1957, AFTA represents the majority of travel agents in Australia and includes all of the major travel agency groups.

AFTA's role is to uphold the interests of members in matters relating to the operation of all travel agencies in Australia. In broad terms these issues are ones that are not addressed by agent chain or corporate entities on behalf of their members, and are ones that involve the industry as a whole.